A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

Connections

June 2007

Agencies Team Up With Kids To Plant Millions Of Trees

by Jeff Briggs

About 2.5 million trees will be provided to youth groups in Missouri over the next five years through the Trees For Tomorrow program, a new initiative cosponsored by MoDOT and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Under the program, MoDOT will purchase half a million trees a year, and the Department of Conservation will distribute them to youth groups throughout the state.

"We're very excited about this partnership," said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "Our job of building roads and bridges requires us to remove trees sometimes, and it's our goal to replace those trees with new ones each year. Trees For Tomorrow is the perfect way to increase the tree population in our state, and by providing them to youth groups, I know we're putting trees in good hands that will help them thrive."

In the early 1990s, MoDOT established a tree-planting policy in response to citizen concerns about the number of trees being removed to build highways. That policy generally called for MoDOT to plant two trees for every tree removed. Compliance, however, was difficult and expensive. This program is primarily intended to be a more cost effective way to replace the trees MoDOT removes in construction projects, although some will also be used in environmental commitments made as a result of impacts made to wetlands and endangered species.

More than 60 varieties of tree seedlings will go to youth groups throughout the state, including Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, FFA and 4-H groups. MoDOT will also fund MDC's long-standing annual program that provides a tree seedling to every fourth grader in the

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A group of fourth graders plants a tree during the kickoff of the Trees For Tomorrow program, while Conservation Director John Hoskins (left) and MoDOT Director Pete Rahn (right) look on.

No MOre Trash! Bash

by Megan Mills

Yellow bags were plentiful along roadsides across the state as volunteers chipped in to clean up litter on roadways during the 2007 No MOre Trash! Bash in April.

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Director Pete Rahn and Outreach Coordinator Melissa Black lead clean-up efforts by example.

Twenty-five MoDOT employees, including Director Pete Rahn, stepped up to clean central office's Adopt-A-Highway section on Missouri Boulevard and another section along Route 50 on April 16 in support of the No MOre Trash! Bash.

"We were encouraging other people to get outside and help clean up trash, so it was only fitting that we did the same," said Director Pete Rahn. "We hope that residents saw us and were encouraged to chip in, too."

Thousands of others helped clean up trash, including MoDOT crews, Missouri Department of Conservation Stream Team members and other employees, Adopt-A-Highway participants, incarcerated crews and other volunteers.

Many clean up events and activities also took place around the state in April in honor of the bash, including the 2007 Earth Day Celebration held on the capital lawn in Jefferson City. More than 1,500 people attended the event where MoDOT handed out seedlings, encouraged attendees to sign the litter pledge and hosted other games and activities.

"Although this year got off to a slow start because of the record low temperatures in the beginning of April, the activity seems to have picked up later in the month,"

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Tightening Our Belts

MoDOT Looks at Ways to Deal With a Dwindling Budget

by Sally Oxenhandler

You've probably heard rumblings that our funding for highway construction and maintenance projects will take a nosedive in 2010. But what exactly does that mean for MoDOT staff? For the short term, it means we have to look at ways to reduce our administrative costs and continue to promote innovation. In the long term, we must work with legislative leaders to find ways to increase future funding for transportation.

Here's the situation. We're coming off of the two biggest construction programs in MoDOT history - 2006 and 2007 - largely due to the additional funding we received from Amendment 3. In 2008, our construction program will total $1.23 billion. After that, however, our

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District 8 workers continue to trim trees in wake of ice storm

Tightening Our Belts

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funding for highway projects begins to decline until it drops off a cliff in 2010 – plummeting to $570 million.

That means we'll barely be able to keep our highways in good condition, much less build the projects our communities need to keep travelers safe, fight congestion and grow and prosper. Over the next 20 years, we predict we'll have $19 billion to spend on highway projects, but publicly identified needs will total $37 billion - a gap of $18 billion.

Our looming financial woes are largely due to growing project needs, increasing construction, maintenance and fuel costs and a stagnant funding source. State and federal fuel taxes – the primary source of transportation revenue - are not set up to keep pace with the rising cost of construction and maintenance. They also provide little revenue for alternative modes of transportation, such as aviation, rail, barge and public transit.

"To put it simply, our operating costs are growing at a faster rate than the revenue we're taking in," said Roberta Broeker, MoDOT's chief financial officer. "We have more needs than we do resources, so we have to make some tough decisions. Our top priority is the STIP."

To gear up for this funding drop, we're doing several things:

- We're downsizing our budget by giving up positions that have remained unfilled for several years and hiring fewer seasonal workers;
- We're not filling some vacancies left by people leaving or retiring;
- We're decreasing district and division administrative budgets and putting the money into maintenance and construction; and
- We're continuing to stress the need for innovation and practical design in everything we do.

Rumors that we're cutting staff – meaning people who are currently in jobs – are not true, said Broeker.

"We don't have any plans to lay people off," she said. "At this point, we're not cutting staff, we're eliminating vacancies and decreasing our budget by the amount of money we historically have not spent."

Chief Engineer Kevin Keith said it is prudent to do what we can to tighten our belts given the move we'll be making in the next three years from a construction program that contains new projects to one that primarily will focus on maintenance.

"New projects require more design work, right of way acquisition and construction, whereas maintenance activities are less complex and costly," said Keith. "That's why the districts' administrative and construction budgets were reduced by 1 percent for fiscal year 2008, but maintenance budgets grew by an average of 2 percent."

Beginning in fiscal year 2008, the districts and divisions will have the flexibility to use personal services funding for expenses and equipment – something they haven't been able to do for a number of years.

"Instead of managing according to the number of employees they have, the districts and divisions will manage based on the amount of money they receive," Broeker said. "For example, if a district decides it's better for them to hire a full-time employee, rather than several seasonal employees or vice versa, they have that option."

Broeker acknowledges there may be some tough times ahead as Amendment 3 bond proceeds are used up and the construction program shrinks.

"It's hard to see critical needs and know the funds aren't available to meet them," she said. "But we have to control costs – that's the bottom line."

New Signs May Soon Ease Congestion on Major Roadways

Missouri First State to Implement Program

by Megan Mills

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permanent signing for designating incident bypass routes,“ said

getting around an incident, they will no longer have to wait f MoDOT crews to put up temporary signs or coordinate flag crews," Rackers said. "As soon as they see a backup, they can immediately choose to take the alternate route by following the 'blue dot.'"

The sign suggesting the alternate route will be permanently installed along the interstate in addition to a smaller sign

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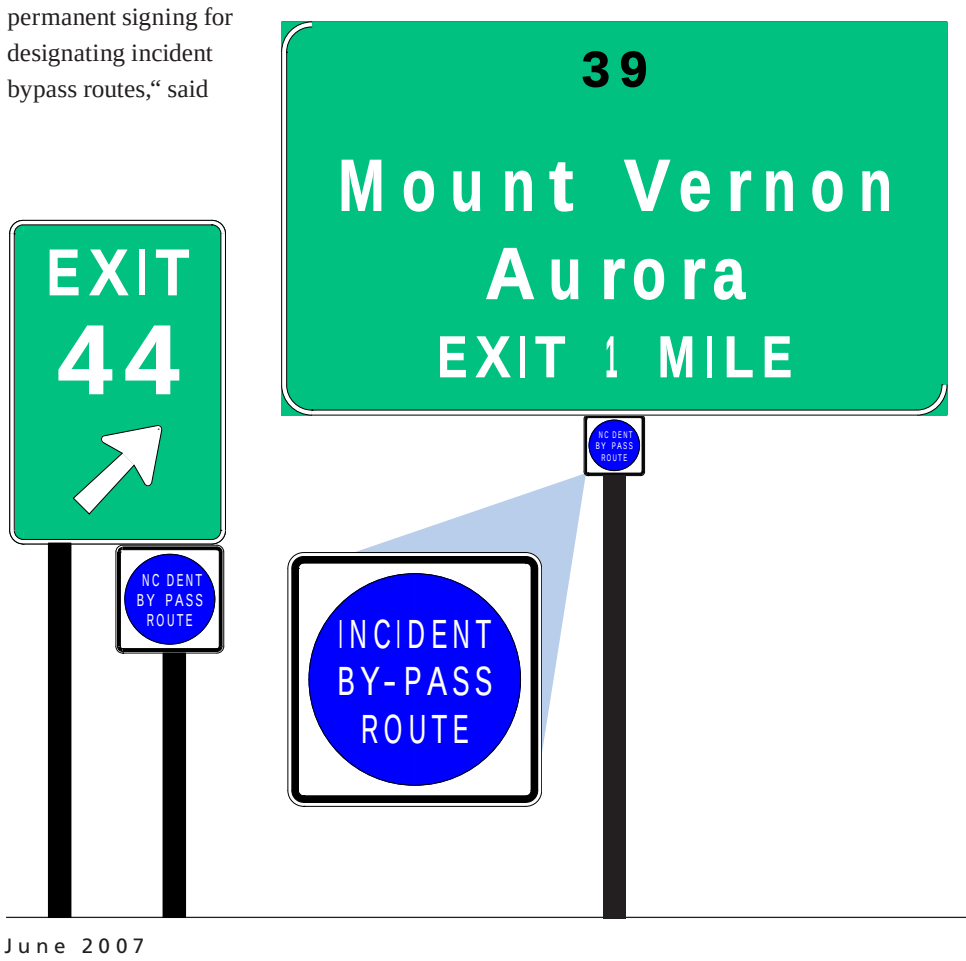

No MOre Trash! Bash

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said Stacy Armstrong, Roadside Management supervisor. "Volunteers were asked to report their trash pick up activities by May 15, so we should have the final numbers soon."

The month-long bash supports No MOre Trash!, a year-round litter prevention campaign established by the Missouri departments of Conservation and Transportation. Volunteers who reported their activity were recognized for their efforts with a lapel pin. Campaign results will be reported in a future Connections issue.

Two Teams Vying for Interstate 29/35 Design-Build Project

by Jennifer Benefield

MoDOT has qualified two design-build teams to compete for a contract to construct Interstate 29/35 highway improvements and a new landmark Missouri River crossing in Kansas City.

The teams submitted Statements of Qualification to MoDOT and were short-listed on May 9. They are now in the process of preparing proposals stating how they plan to accomplish the project.

"We are thrilled to have two exceptional teams with strong local, national and international reputations interested in designing and constructing our project," said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. "We look forward to working with both of them over the next several months as they develop their proposals."

The short-listed teams are:

- American Bridge Company, comprised of American Bridge Company (Corapolis, Pa.) as the sole design-builder; and other major participants including, URS Corporation (Overland Park, Kan.) and Ideker, Inc. (St. Joseph).
- Paseo Corridor Constructors, comprised of joint venture partners Clarkson Construction Company (Kansas City), Massman Construction Company (Kansas City) and Kiewit Western Company (Omaha, Neb.); and other major participants including, Parsons Transportation Group, Inc. (St. Louis) and TranSystems Corporation (Kansas City).

American Bridge, Clarkson Construction, and Massman Construction companies each participated in the construction of the original Paseo Bridge between 1952 and 1954.

The kcICON project is one of three pilot design-build projects statewide. The design-build process will shorten the duration of the project and give Missourians more project for the money though innovation.

The contractor team will be selected using a Best Value process to determine who can best meet or exceed MoDOT's project goals:

- Deliver the Interstate 29/35 corridor improvements within the total program budget of $245 million. (Reconstruction/rehabilitation of about four miles of Interstate 29/35 from just north of Route 210 (Armour Road) in North Kansas City, continuing south over the Missouri River into the northeast corner of the downtown Kansas City freeway loop.)
- Construct a landmark Missouri River bridge(s) that can be reasonably maintained to provide more than a century of useful service.
- Maximize safety, mobility, aesthetic and capacity improvements in the corridor.
- Engage stakeholders and the community to successfully develop and deliver the project.
- Meet or beat the project completion date of October 31, 2011.

The contractor should be selected this fall and major construction could start by early 2008. Additional information is available on the project's Web site: *www.kcicon.org.*

Taking it to the Extreme Reunited Team Spirit Students

by Megan Mills

Students and Highway Safety staff participated in the 2007 Team Spirit Reunion, themed Taking it to the Extreme. The reunion, which took place on April 23-24 in Jefferson City, brought together high school students who attended last July's week-long Team Spirit Training session. The training educates students about different highway safety programs for high school students and trains them on ways to implement those programs in their schools.

The teams from different schools talked about the traffic safety programs implemented in their schools and how they got students to participate and the success of their programs. In particular, the Brag 'N Steal session allowed students to showcase their accomplishments through a display. The team with the most creative efforts received a trophy and cash prize.

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Students reunited to share the successes of highway safety programs they've implemented in their schools.

"The reunion was very successful. It helps keep students motivated about Team Spirit and it gives us a way to learn about what programs are working and which ones aren't," said Adrian Hendricks, state youth coordinator for Highway Safety. "Part of the reunion activities included discussions about current legislation and, because of the push for primary safety belt legislation, we discussed it and offered an opportunity for the students to speak with their legislators."

A fun portion of the conference featured extreme games, keeping with the theme. Other reunion events included a speaker, idea forums, an award presentation, a trip to the capitol and more.

"This is my first year working with Team Spirit participants and I am really enjoying discovering what it's all about and meeting the young leaders," Hendricks said.

The 2007 Team Spirit leadership training conference will be held July 21-24 in Cape Girardeau or July 26-28 in Jefferson City. The training conference is designed to empower youth to take an active role in preventing alcohol and other drug use. After the conferences, students return to their towns to make positive changes in their schools and communities. Each school is allowed to send eight to 10 participants who learn leadership skills and information about traffic safety programs.

MoDOT Responds to Flooding

by Kristi Jamison

Severe thunderstorms in western Missouri on May 6 caused flooding along the Missouri River and its tributaries, forcing the closure of several highways in MoDOT Districts 1, 2, 4 and 5.

MoDOT coordinated transportation-related efforts, including monitoring roads and installing signs to close roads when needed. Working with the State Emergency Management Agency, District 1 crews even provided signs to help several northwest counties. Also at SEMA's request, MoDOT crews delivered sand bags in Callaway County to protect a levee along Route 94 and property at the Jefferson City airport.

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Director Pete Rahn helps Maintenance workers fill sand bags. Left to right: Dale Baumhoer, Director Rahn, Rich Murray, Jamey Asahl and Pedro Chaidez.

"Crews statewide are ready to close roads as they need to in an emergency," said State Traffic Engineer Eileen Rackers. "MoDOT takes a proactive approach from monitoring conditions to preparing for road closures."

Another one of our major responsibilities was providing one place the public could get current information on road closures. We were able to inform the public of changes in road conditions quickly and accurately using some quick additions to our Web site.

"Accurate information on road closures is critical because it impacts everything from how we route commercial trucks to how motorists plan their trips," Rackers said.

MoDOT provided this information by asking the districts to input road closures into the flood condition database. Then IS staff linked it from the Maintenance Intranet site to the external Web site.

MoDOT also strengthened internal communications by holding daily conference calls with all districts to ensure everyone was prepared and fully aware of the situation as it changed.

State Maintenance Engineer Jim Carney says, "We will now work with FHWA, FEMA and SEMA to assess damages and determine what road and bridge repairs are needed in the 33 counties affected by the flood."

Trees For Tomorrow

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state. Plus, trees will be provided in conservation areas to improve wildlife habitats, and will be available at Arbor Day and Earth Day events.

"Trees For Tomorrow is a great way to get kids involved in protecting our natural resources," said MDC Director John Hoskins. "We're proud to work with MoDOT and kids all over Missouri to get trees planted, improve our environment and enhance the natural beauty of our state."

n Sc it

Multimodal Division Director Brian Weiler, along with other guests, spoke at the first Missouri State Aviation Day on April 25. The event, sponsored by the Missouri Pilot's Association with support from MoDOT's Aviation Section, was designed to increase public awareness of aviation's economic impact in Missouri. Activities included a B-2 flyover from Whiteman Air Force Base, exhibitors inside the capital rotunda and a chance for aviation enthusiasts to speak with their legislators on aviation issues.

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Rudolph (Rudy) E. Farber was sworn in as a member of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission on May 9 by Missouri Supreme Court Judge Mary Rhodes Russell.

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An APAC-Missouri, Inc. contractor crew performs milling on a paving project in Arrow Rock. While it may sound simple enough, the job is complicated because the location is a national landmark site where the stone gutters lining the street are said to have been built by slaves in the late 1850s. Legal protections require that the stones can't be disturbed

Senior MCS Agents Take Charge of Large Accounts

by DeAnne Bonnot

Thousands of motor carriers make up Motor Carrier Services' customer base. As the 80/20 rule predicts, most are small operations of a handful of trucks. A few hundred larger carriers manage much larger fleets and complete dozens of regulatory transactions or permit requests for their fleets each month. What's the best way to serve these large carriers so that both MoDOT and the carrier benefit?

MCS decided to assign one senior MCS agent to each large carrier beginning in February. That agent acts like an account executive, handling transactions for their assigned companies. They process nearly all the carrier's requests, answer questions, share MoDOT news and stay on top of deadlines, reminding their customers to send payments or paperwork on time.

"My customers tell me that it's easier for them to stay on top of their business with the state. They enjoy having a single point of contact and can relax, knowing I've got them covered," said Senior Motor Carrier Services Agent Jean Carpenter.

Many agents have traveled to visit their customers face-to-face. While there, they discover how their work makes a difference in the customers' bottom line.

"I've known my assigned customers for years," said Carpenter. "We started from a good place and our friendship has grown.

"They trust me, which means a lot."

June Service Anniversaries

40 Years

Glenda Robinett	CO
Bart D. Harper	D7
Suzanne Roland	D10

35 Years

Herbert W. Byrum	D4
Billy J. Aldridge	D7

30 Years

Steven R. Brooks	D1
Earl W. Barnard	D3
David W. Manking	D4
Roger A. Schwartze	D5
Christopher P. Griggs	D6
Charles L. Vollmer	D6
Daniel K. Salisbury	D7
Henry E. Haggard	D9
Dianna L. Silvester	CO
John D. Wenzlick	CO
Danny R. Stephens	CO

25 Years

Mark A. Durham	D4
Michael E. Kiso	D5
Joe C. Housewright	D9

20 Years

Marvin L. Jackson	D1
Louise Carroll	D4
Terry R. Imhoff	D5
Connie J. Roadruck	D5
Kenneth R. Breidenbach	D6
Rachel L. Wilhelm	D6

15 Years

Larry W. Jacobson	D1
Jerry A. Lininger	D1
Philip E. Sandifer	D2
Donald V. Bunch	D4
William R. Abbott	D5
Eric E. Schroeter	D5
Albert Y. Deaton	D6
Yan Gluzman	D6
Bradley E. Hays	D6
Kenneth L. Rothschild	D6
Todd G. Strong	D6
Robert G. Becker	D8
Cindy L. Merritt	D8
Donald T. Saiko	D8
Brian N. Holt	D10
Keith J. Kliethermes	CO
David L. Taylor	CO
Aaron A. Anglen	CO
Lawrence L. Ayres	CO
Joseph G. Jones	CO
Michael W. Shea	CO
Mark D. Stallings	CO
Paula Sue Walls	CO
Emmett E. Nichols	CO

10 Years

Maria T. Longoria	D1
Heath J. Otte	D3
Christopher D. Shulse	D3
Elmer H. Gillespie	D4
Clifton J. Scott	D4
Patrick J. Bauer	D5
Geoffrey M. Franks	D5
Marcus D. Hall	D6
Scott E. Bachman	D7
Dewayne D. Coffin	D7
Angela I. Eden	D8
Mickeal D. Carda	D9
Lloyd D. Crewse	D9
Darrell W. Emery	D9
Donald Essner	D10
Cheri M. Middendorf	CO
Ruth M. Falter	CO
Carol J. Pryor	CO
Tanya S. Pleus	CO

5 Years

Angela Kaye Ellis	D1
Dustin W. Herron	D1
Cory L. Worthwine	D1
Thomas J. Holman	D2
Michael R. Briggs	D4
Troy W. Collins	D4
Donald R. Gentry	D4
Dustin J. Dorenkamp	D6
Robert W. Overton	D6
Thomas L. Perritt	D6
Stephen R. Beeler	D7
Phyllis D. Humphrey	D7
Darrin L. Carroll	D8
Eric M. Hambey	D8
Timothy N. Thornton	D8
George T. Marcak	D9
Heath L. Mcnew	D9
Michael P. Chasteen	D10
Bryan A. Hartnagel	CO
Michael J. Van De Riet	CO
Craig N. Atkins	CO
Troy D. Myers	CO

In Memoriam

Retirees

Charles D'Angelo	D6	April 12
David "Conrad" C. Ward	D10	April 12
Arthur "Art" J. Rhodes	CO	April 13
Jim "Jimmy" F. Frisbie	D5	April 13
Raymond "Ray" H. Lahmeyer	D5	April 14
Elroy Crumes	D6	April 19
David F. Lovelady	D1	April 29

May Retirements

There were no May retirements.

CO Central Office

MoDOT Communications Earn National Awards

by Patti Knopke

MoDOT has been reaping the benefits of its efforts to promote the department's key initiatives over the past year.

The National Association of Government Communicators recognized the department with five awards in April. The NAGC is a national organization made up of federal, state and local government communications professionals.

"The national recognition MoDOT received from this group is a credit to the great work of district and central office staff in all parts of the department," said Shane Peck, Community Relations director.

First place honors were given to MoDOT's Missouri Advance Planning Online Funding Allocation Challenge and Highway Safety's radio public service announcement promoting booster seat use. A second-place award went to the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program for its kick-off event. The Ken Hoierman video public service announcement and the 2006 State of Transportation Address both received Awards of Excellence.

The American Road and Transportation Builders Association also acknowledged MoDOT with two PRIDE awards in May. These awards were created to honor excellence in community relations and public education that enhances the image of the nation's transportation construction industry.

The department was recognized for its Missouri Advance Planning initiative in the Community Relations category for state transportation departments. The Ken Hoierman PSA was recognized in the Public-Media Relations/ Education category for state transportation departments.

What's in a Name?

The Equal Opportunity Division has a new addition... to its name. It is now the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division.

"The division's new title is much more reflective of the division's overall functions and goals," said Brenda Treadwell-Martin, director of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division. "Furthermore, inclusion of the word diversity within the division name clearly outlines the division's goal to increase diversity throughout our agency.

"Our division's focus is on educating employees about diversity, ensuring equal opportunity for everyone, creating programs to retain a diverse work force and increasing diversity within our agency as a whole."

Many of the different programs and activities the division administers are driven by diversity, from the Co-op and Mentorship programs to the TRAC program and the Diversity Conference.

Through these and other programs and activities, the division's staff reaches beyond equal opportunity, with strong ties to increasing diversity, educating employees about diversity and reaching out to the community to educate people of all racial, ethnic and age groups about the opportunities at MoDOT.

Besides a new name, you can also check out the EOD Division's new look. EODD recently unveiled their updated Intranet site. Go to *wwwi/intranet/eo/* for up-to date-information on their programs and activities, as well as a calendar of events.

Youngsters Explore the World of Transportation

by Patti Knopke

More than 50 children descended on the Central Office on April 26 for this year's Take a Child to Work Day. The children got a chance to learn more about what their parents, relatives or friends do at work and they were able to participate in structured activities like the equipment presentation behind the District 5 facility, a tour of the sign shop, a presentation by Design staff at the Headquarters facility and a tour of the Materials Lab.

At the Materials Lab, Paul Stegemann demonstrates the different types of crushed rock MoDOT uses to build roads.

Sign Shop Worker Brad Clark shows our young visitors how to trim a sign.

Children visiting the Central Office and District 5 enjoyed a tour of MoDOT's larger equipment.

for more info

Connections Editor	Kristi Jamison
Phone	573.526.2482
E-mail	kristine.jamison@modot.mo.gov

105 W. Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102

D1 Northwest

Flood!

Photos by Holly Lea Murphy, Regional Maintenance Supervisor Bill Gimse, and Intermediate Highway Designer Michael Mooney

The rain started on Saturday, May 5, 2007. By 5:30 p.m. Sunday, we were closing Interstate 29 between the towns of Mound City and Craig in Holt County. It rained all night and by Monday morning, we knew we were facing a serious situation. Before the crisis finally passed (as we go to press, the waters are still receding), we had closed more than 80 roads because of high water, including I-29, which we had to close on two separate occasions in two separate locations. Towns all over the Northwest District had to be evacuated and, at one point, the State Emergency Management Agency stepped in to ask for our help to transport sandbags to a levee that had breached. Crews in Northwest Missouri worked around the clock barricading roads; transporting sandbags; and letting people know where and what roads were going under water, what roads were closed completely and what roads had reopened. It was a challenge.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Elaine Justus
Phone	816.387.2353
E-mail	margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64502

D2 NorthCentral

1993 Revisited?

Brad Gates

The Grand River churning over Route 65 south of Chillicothe in Livingston County.

Although it wasn't as bad as 1993, North Central Missouri was hit hard with heavy rains the second week of May, causing flooding in several areas across District 2.

Crews worked around the clock barricading roads that were impassible, and flagging traffic through water when it was safe to keep as many roads opened as they could. They monitored the rising water, used all available resources to keep up on breaking levees, estimated times the rivers would crest, and of course, monitored the weather forecast.

Four major routes were closed or had lane reductions - Route 36, Route 65 in two separate locations, Route 24 and Route 10. Many secondary roads were also closed.

Equipment such as changeable message boards were borrowed from neighboring districts, and emergency services, media and the general public were kept informed on the status of the roadways. Everyone worked together and did a great job.

The photos say more than written words could. Although the waters have receded, the damage remains behind.

Keith Hartwig

Flagging traffic to keep the roads open as long as possible on Route 24 near Brunswick.

Brad Gates

Anthony Zuccarini

Above, part of Route 65 south of Chillicothe disappears. Left, Route 24 between Carrollton and DeWitt in Carroll County is completely submerged.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Tammy Wallace
Phone	660.385.8209
E-mail	Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov

Route 63
P.O. Box 8
Macon, MO 63552

Pioneer Award for Diversity

by Anthony Zuccarini

Pictured left to right: Vickie Ray, Human Resource specialist; Denise Hutchinson, senior Human Resources technician; and District Engineer Dan Niec. Dan recognized Denise and Vickie for their efforts in helping the district receive this award.

The Webster's Dictionary defines diversity as the state or fact of being different, an unlikeness. MoDOT District 2 defines diversity as success.

On March 27, that motto helped District 2 achieve the Pioneer Award for Diversity at the 2007 Diversity Conference held at George Washington Carver Farm in Jefferson City. Two Pioneer Awards were given during the conference. District 8/Springfield received the other award.

Those who attended this year's event for District 2 were: Ellen Gehringer, Human Resources manager; Donald "Deek" Bigby, Maintenance superintendent; Keith Hartwig, Maintenance superintendent; and Brad Gates, Maintenance superintendent.

The award was presented to District 2 in recognition of our efforts to increase diversity.

Last year, District 2 took part in 12 recruitment events. So far this year, the district has participated in four recruitment events.

Although each of these events are crucial for creating a diverse workplace, each MoDOT employee is important in helping to get MoDOT into the community.

"To be the best we can be, our workforce needs to reflect the cultural makeup of our community," said Ellen Gehringer, Human Resource manager. "But to attain this level of diversity, we need our employees to help by making us aware of any diverse organizations or groups in their areas that we can approach to share the word about career opportunities at MoDOT."

Gehringer said she wants to thank all the employees who have assisted so far, but it is an ongoing task to create a diverse application pool. We need everyone's help to be successful.

Trash Bash!

The month of April found George Long and his group from the Macon First Christian Church picking up trash along Route 36. Cleaning this section of roadside is something George has been doing since 1998, when he retired from his job as MoDOT's District 2 geologist.

"When I retired I wanted to do something for the community, and this seemed like a good thing to do."

George has found many interesting things over the years. On this day he found a Sears Craftsman 7-7/8 inch wrench.

One of George's team members, Art Brandon, likes to pick up along the golf course area. His son is a golfer and over the years Art has supplied his son with many a golf ball picked up along the right of way.

Long-time member of the Adopt-A-Highway Program George Long clearing up Route 36.

We are grateful to all of our Adopt-A-Highway folks in north central Missouri for keeping our roadways looking great!

Keith Hartwig

Debris covers the road at the Route 10 and Route FF Junction 14 miles west of Carrollton in Carroll County.

D3 Northeast

Community Service Helps Reduce Litter

by Tana Akright

As the flowers begin blooming on Missouri roadsides, the first sure sign of spring is the litter that can be seen along the highways. Thoughtless and illegal, littering yields a heavy burden of trash along highways throughout Missouri. MoDOT's Adopt-A-Highway program consists of more than 3,700 groups statewide, including area residents, businesses and civic organizations who have volunteered to help rid the landscape of this eyesore.

Besides volunteers, some of the local judicial systems have recently started requiring lawbreakers to perform a specified number of hours of unpaid labor picking up trash along roadways. "People pitch unwanted things out the window of their car, having forgotten that littering is against the law," remarked Chris Shulse, roadside manager.

Several counties, such as Clark, Marion, Monroe, Pike and Ralls counties in northeast Missouri, have utilized the litter pickup program as a part of the offender's "delegated reimbursement" to the community. According to Ralls County Judge David Mobley, people in trouble with the law that have to appear before the Ralls County Associate and Municipal Courts are often assigned picking up trash as a community service.

"In Ralls County, anyone found guilty of littering is required, as part of the punishment, to perform anywhere from 10 to 80 hours of community service specifically picking up trash and litter along the county's roads," Mobley said. "We have adopted a two-mile stretch of Route 61 and looking to increase this in the future."

The money spent on litter cleanup could instead resurface many miles of roads and improve the habitat. "We want people to realize littering isn't good for anyone," said Shulse. The local programs and volunteers make this a winning situation for everyone.

Ralls County Judge David Mobley accepts a certificate from MoDOT Roadside Manager Chris Shulse in recognition of their contributions to the No MOre Trash and Adopt A Highway programs in Missouri. The judge orders community service in the form of picking up trash along the highway.

Welcome to the Northeast District, Paula!

Employees and media welcomed Paula Gough to the Northeast District last month. Chief Engineer Kevin Keith introduced Paula to the Northeast District MoDOT team expressing his confidence in her abilities to lead and guided by her "passion" for northeast Missouri.

Immediately following staff introductions, several members of the media attended a press conference.

Paula is a native of the Northeast District as she was raised in Mexico and now resides in Shelbina. While she is excited about the completion of Routes 61 and 36 to four-lane highways, she is already involved in discussions about the other needs of the region in preparation for the transportation investment priorities process later this year.

Paula Gough, the new district engineer, interviewed with media following the announcement of her appointment.

Celebrating Red, White & Blue

As a way to say "thank you" and recognize hard work, State Employee Recognition Week was celebrated in the Northeast District with a variety of activities including Patriotic Day. Employees were encouraged to wear red, white and blue, and Human Resources Manager Cherie Brocaille put together a chocolate fountain and treats on a patriotic display. Other activities included breakfast snacks, Take Tuesday Off Day (we know, it was the holiday), Snack Day Extravaganza and the Leisure Lunch Day. It's obvious food is important to MoDOT employees in northeast Missouri!

Beverley Palmer, Cherie Brocaille and Teri Zeiger enjoy snacks at the chocolate fountain on Patriotic Day.

Silex High School students were the audience for the Buckle Up and Don't Drink and Drive docu-drama held right before prom. Several efforts have been made in northeast Missouri through local law enforcement and Blueprint activities to remind teenagers of the consequences.

Check out the Bring Your Child to Work Day pictures on District 3's Intranet site. We had more than 50 visitors that day, and each was given 'royal' treatment! In addition to bags of goodies and drawings in the credit union, a special card was sent to every child with a picture of him or her with their parent. Pictured is Chad Arment with his son, Maverick.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Marisa Brown
Phone 573.248.2502
E-mail marisa.brown@modot.mo.gov

Route 61 South
P.O. Box 1067
Hannibal, MO 63401

D4
KansasCityArea

Buckle Up in Your Truck

by Kerri Lewis

The message is simple: Buckle Up in Your Truck.

Studies have shown that pickup truck drivers and their passengers are among those least likely to wear a seat belt. The number is higher among men ages 18-34 – only 66 percent of Missouri drivers in that age group use seat belts.

During a May 2 press conference at the Ford Motor Company Plant in Claycomo, representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, MoDOT, KDOT, and local law enforcement answered questions and reported the grim facts:

- Pickups are more likely to roll over during an accident, creating a higher risk for occupants to be ejected from the vehicle.
- 85 percent of the people who died in pickup truck crashes last year were not buckled in.
- Individuals are 31 times more likely to be killed in a crash if they do not wear a seat belt.

During the Buckle Up in Your Truck campaign now under way, Missouri will focus on increasing safety belt use among pickup truck occupants. Local law enforcement agencies across the state will be looking for people in trucks who are not buckled up. If you are pulled over for a traffic offense and are not wearing your seat belt, you will likely get a ticket. The enforcement effort precedes the annual Click it or Ticket safety belt campaign.

Romell Cooks, regional administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, spoke of the importance for seat belt usage among pickup truck drivers and passengers.

"Our goal is to save lives."

--Colonel William Seck, Kansas Highway Patrol
--Colonel James F. Keathley, Missouri State Highway Patrol

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Joel Blobaum
Phone	816.622.6327
E-mail	joel.blobaum@modot.mo.gov

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64068

I-Build Event a Success

by Kerri Lewis

The annual I-Build Event (formally known as Crayons to CAD) was another hit for 2007. More than 1,900 middle school and high school students visited the regional construction and building industry Construction Career Day. The May 3 event introduced the students to the variety of careers available in the construction industry. Several participated in the hands-on demonstrations and visited many booths to explore career opportunities.

District 4 participated with Kansas City's premier regional construction and building industry and the National Institute of Construction Excellence, providing an opportunity to allow young people the chance to experience different aspects of the construction industry. Throughout the event, students were able to see the importance of math and science skills; experience the importance of responsibility, time management and teamwork as a foundation for a positive career; and get a feel for the academics needed and training available for a variety of rewarding careers in the construction industry.

District 4's participation also allowed students to get up close and personal with a variety of MoDOT's heavy equipment, view the KC Scout's elaborate system and introduce them to the help avialable via the Motorist Assist Vehicle.

High school students received a hands-on demonstration of some large equipment used by MoDOT.

One student had the opportunity to rise above the rest.

Several kids were able to get up close and personal with the Lee's Summit police car at the District 4 office and hear about the importance of DARE during the annual Bring Your Child to Work Day.

D5 Central

Crews Make Quick Work of Slide Near Hermann

by Holly Dentner

On Wednesday evening, April 4, Maintenance Superintendent Jim Honse received a call from the Hermann Police Department. They reported two-inch wide cracks appearing on Route 100 about two miles east of the city. Honse went out with some local maintenance crews to take a look at the situation, and by midnight the road was closed because the cracks were growing fast. The next morning they discovered that the 150-foot long cracks were getting much wider and deeper. The ground beneath the road was cracking and sliding, too.

April 5, 7 p.m. – The pressure from the hill sliding away begins buckling the pavement.

"Within a few hours we knew something was pulling the road apart," said Alan Trampe, area engineer. "We closed the road so we could figure out what was going on and fix it."

April 6, 9 a.m. – The westbound lane completely collapsed, as MoDOT crews determine how to start repairs.

Crews monitored the cracks on Thursday, April 5, and sent for core drillers from Central Office to help determine what was causing the slide and how much damage it would do. According to Trampe, the slide was moving so fast that within a matter of hours the westbound lane had dropped 32 inches from the normal pavement level.

By Friday, April 6, the entire westbound lane of the road had completely disintegrated with the hillside below. Core drillers determined that a layer of mud beneath the roadway had become so slick that it was causing the entire hillside to collapse.

"A layer of wet clay was creating a slide plain under the road," said Trampe. "There was a lot of water accumulating with no where for it to go, so it started moving the dirt and rock."

A contractor was hired to start excavation on April 10. They spent the next two weeks digging out the unstable soil and replacing it with rock. MoDOT crews drove the trucks that hauled material in and out of the area.

"We got help from maintenance crews across the district, plus District 3 and District 6," said Honse. "We used every truck and employee that was available and crews worked from daylight to dark, seven days a week."

Water was visible during the excavation, running along the rocks and collecting in shallow pools. To make sure it didn't come back, the hill was tiered with rock and a new drainage pipe placed under the road to help direct water through the area.

April 20 – It took crews only a few days to haul hundreds of loads of rock to fill the hole left after all mud was removed.

Crews averaged over 220 truckloads of material hauled out each day. By the time the area was clear, they had hauled 26,481 cubic yards in nine days.

Once the entire area was excavated, rock was brought in to fill the hillside. It took crews five days and 1,467 truckloads to fill it in. A total of about 22,000 tons of rock was used.

Between April 24 and 26, crews worked on the new roadbed, getting it ready for asphalt. After 303 tons of asphalt was laid on April 27, crews installed guardrail and Route 100 reopened on April 30.

"We finished over two weeks ahead of schedule, and it took a lot of hard work," said Trampe. "This was a big job and the many, many people involved deserve a big thank you for getting it done so quickly."

May Floods in Mid-Missouri

Flood water made its way across the state in early May, and the Central District was prepared to face flood stage predictions that put the Missouri River within four feet of the 1993 flood levels. Fortunately, the water didn't make it that high in mid-Missouri.

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn and Intermediate Crew Worker Rich Murray fill sandbags during a news conference on April 8.

MoDOT crews along the river spent the days prior to the river crest preparing barricades, detour signs and sandbags. The district did close portions of seven routes in three counties, including a section of Route 179 in Moniteau County at Sandy Hook.

"We were geared up to handle a worst-case scenario, but we got lucky," said Kerry Thompson, Boonville maintenance superintendent. "Motorists in the flooded areas knew their detours and there wasn't a huge affect on traffic."

Incarcerated crews spent the week filling 20,000 sandbags. Some were taken to Callaway County to protect Route 94 near Mokane. About 11,000 went to the Jefferson City airport, where Missouri State Highway Patrol cadets used them to create a four-foot wall around offices in the patrol's hangar.

Even though the floodwater didn't rise as high as predicted, that didn't stop worried motorists from calling the district to find out what was going on.

"I think we had just as many calls as we do during snow fight," said Mary Ann Bax, customer service representative. "We were very busy the whole week."

Maintenance Supervisor Bobby Slater, Senior Maintenance Worker Ricky Ramirez and Intermediate Maintenance Worker James Hake pump water from the side of Route 94 in Callaway County.

Hundreds Attend Meetings for Route 63

About 450 people attended public meetings on May 1 and 2 to learn about the preliminary alternatives presented as part of the Route 63 Environmental Impact Study. Those who attended could review aerial maps that showed sections of possible alignments in the study area through Osage, Maries and Phelps Counties.

for more info

Community Relations Manager: Kristin Gerber
Phone: 573.522.3375
E-mail: kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov

1511 Missouri Boulevard
P.O. Box 718
Jefferson City, MO 65102

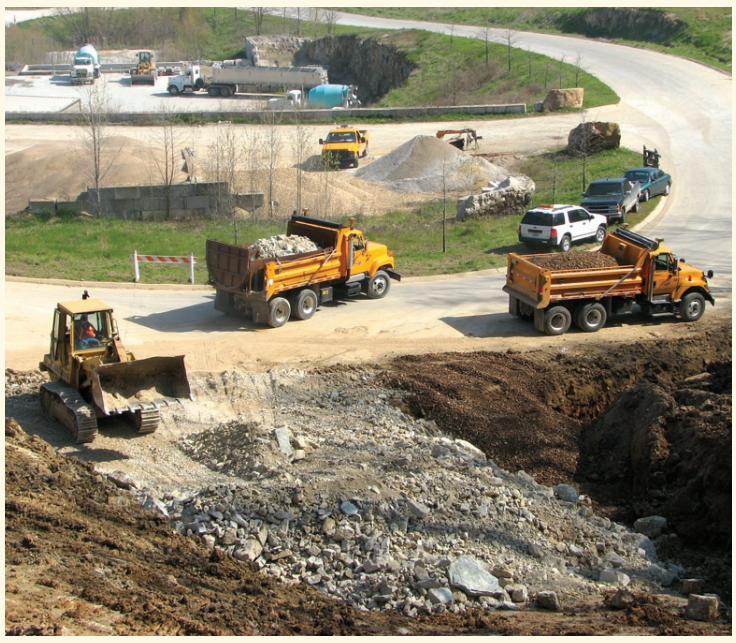
D6
St. Louis Area

District 6 Shows Teamwork on Route 100 Repairs

by Kara Price

When disaster struck District 5's Route 100 near Hermann in early April, District 6 crews sprung into action to help their neighbors to the west.

Providing 25 trucks, District 6 was able to help District 5 haul rock from the nearby quarry and unload it onto the collapsed highway, working day-long shifts until the work was done. Seven superintendent areas within District 6 supported this team effort to help reopen Route 100 as quickly as possible.



District 6 assists District 5 in hauling rock to repair Route 100 from sunrise to sunset within a four-day period.

"The great teamwork that was shown by the maintenance crews exemplifies the one-team approach of MoDOT employees willing to help others within the state no matter what the problem is," said Denis Bigley, District 6 Maintenance engineer.

District 5 Maintenance Engieer Michael Teel expressed his gratitude for the cross-district cooperation that helped them complete the emergency project ahead of schedule.

"Thanks for the help on providing additional trucks, District 6," said Michael Teel, District 5 Maintenance engineer. "It was a pretty big task since about 20,000 tons of shot rock and another 2,000 tons of base rock were hauled. We couldn't have done it as quickly without you."

"I am proud of the maintenance employees for their hard work," added Bigley. "This situation shows the dedication of our employees to provide an excellent transportation experience that delights our customers."

Way to go District 6 maintenance employees on your dedicated efforts and excellent teamwork!

Owen Hasson (right), District 6 Maintenance Superintendent, discusses with Michael Teel (left), District 5 Maintenance Engineer, what assistance District 6 could provide to help repair Route 100.

for more info

Community Relations Manager: Marie Elliott
Phone: 314.340.4524
E-mail: yvonne.elliott@modot.mo.gov

1590 Woodlake Drive
Chesterfield, MO 63017

First Bridge is Demolished For the New I-64

by Melissa Harris

The implosion of the Tamm Avenue Bridge on April 20 marked the first major construction milestone of the New I-64 project.

Within minutes after the implosion, crews began breaking up the concrete of what just moments before was the Tamm Avenue bridge over I-64. The interstate re-opened to traffic 26 hours later, an entire day ahead of schedule!

Hundreds came out to watch as the first of 29 bridges was demolished. Both directions of Interstate 64 were closed at 10 p.m. that evening for the implosion. They waited a couple of hours in anticipation of the 3,200 tons of concrete to be imploded, which occurred at 11:30 p.m. in just a matter of seconds.

Within minutes of the explosion, jackhammers were in place and began breaking up the concrete of the 44-year-old bridge. Crews worked night and day, breaking up the concrete and hauling it away. Twenty-six hours after the implosion, I-64 was re-opened in both directions one day ahead of schedule!

The reconstruction of the Tamm Avenue bridge is expected to last about six months. Since the early stages of I-64 construction have begun, motorists are now experiencing road and ramp closures. By early June, the northbound Interstate 170 exit ramp to Galleria Parkway will be closed permanently. One lane of northbound I-170 will also close at that time as well as Kingshighway Blvd. traffic being narrowed to two lanes in each direction between Hospital Plaza Dr. and Oakland Ave. The east half of the bridge over Clayton Ave. will be demolished, so construction can begin on the new bridge in early June. I-64 lanes under Kingshighway will be shifted out from the median and narrowed to allow for construction of the center pier for the new Kingshighway overpass bridge.

St. Louis Launches 511 Number

by Andrew Gates

On May 11 (5/11), Missouri joined forces with 27 other states providing travel information this month as MoDOT launched 511 services during an event at the St. Louis Transportation Management Center.

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn "threw out the first call" during the event officially launching the service. "Let me show you how easy this is," he said, before making the phone call in front of the media and 511 service partners. After pressing three numbers and saying a few words, he had the latest detailed information for traffic on westbound I-64 within St. Louis.

During the event, MoDOT recognized its partners, Traffic.com and telecommunications companies, and unveiled the new 511 sign that was placed along MoDOT-owned roads and commuter parking lots.

The free 511 voice-operated telephone service is provided to MoDOT through an agreement with Traffic.com. It allows travelers to get the latest information on roadway congestion or incidents simply by dialing 5-1-1. Travelers in Illinois or in other districts within Missouri can access the same travel information for St. Louis by dialing 877-4STL-511 (877-478-5511). The 511 travel information service is free, though cellular users will pay normal airtime and roaming charges, and pay phone customers will pay the minimum pay-phone toll fees. Travelers can get information on their routes sent directly to their telephone or e-mail accounts by registering on the co-sponsored MoDOT and Traffic.com Web site.

The service will cover St. Louis City and St. Louis County, as well as Franklin, Jefferson and St. Charles counties. Hopefully, additional services may be implemented across the state over the next few years.

MoDOT crews place 511 signs across along interstates within the St. Louis area.

D7 Southwest

Management Team Cleans Up Roadsides

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

In an effort to make Missouri roadsides cleaner, the District 7 management team spent the afternoon of April 20 picking up trash along Route 171 in Jasper County and Interstate 44 in Newton County.

District Engineer Becky Baltz was joined by district managers Andy Ellsworth, Lori Marble, Paul Todey, Patti Radley, Greg Storm, Daryl Weinkein, Beth Schaller, Sean Matlock, Scott McKee, Jerry Davis, Doug Jackson, Gary Clinton, John Sinclair and Skip Schaller in beautifying the areas near the Joplin airport and the eastbound rest area.

"Why on earth do people throw trash out their windows?" Baltz asked. "I was amazed at the amount of trash we picked up just in that three-hour time."

Project Manager Sean Matlock and Right of Way Manager Andy Ellsworth pick up trash along Interstate 44 in Newton County.

Area Engineer Skip Schaller does his part to clean up District 7's roadsides.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Lori Marble
Phone	417.629.3329
E-mail	lori.marble@modot.mo.gov

3901 E. 32nd Street
P.O. Box 1445
Joplin, MO 64802

Take Our Children to Work Day Gets Bigger Each Year

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

April 26 marked the annual Take Our Children to Work Day. District 7 participated by planning a full day of fun for employees and their guests.

Our students for the day learned about MoDOT's Materials inspections, how our designers plan and design roads, how our survey equipment works and what new bridges look like before they're finished. We had just under 100 employees and children participate.

Assistant Construction and Materials Engineer Jim Conley explains how his department inspects aggregate and other materials.

Intermediate Construction Inspector Greg Chapman describes the paving process on the new Route 71 in McDonald County.

Survey Party Chief Brian Atnip, right, talks about the survey equipment while Randy McDaniel, left, and Rick Black, both of Survey, listen.

Preparing for the Big One

Traffic Operations Engineer Jennifer Hinson and Senior Signal and Lighting Electrician Shannon Johnson access the emergency communication system in preperation for the New Madrid earthquake drill in June.

D8
Springfield Area

Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Workers from various parts of the district have been teaming up to continue ice-storm debris cleanup. Trimming tree limbs on Polk County Route AA near Halfway (above) are Senior Maintenance Worker Denny Peppers of the Dove shop in Laclede County, left, and Danny Johnson of the Goodhope shop in Douglas County.

Senior Highway Designer Aaron Jaeger (top left photo) listens to a customer at a design public hearing on a project to rebuild Interstate 44/Glenstone Avenue interchange and widen Greene County Route H to Valley Water Mill Road in Springfield.

Springfield Senior Maintenance Worker Paula Hess (bottom left photo) is one of several MoDOT employees who demonstrated equipment to Bingham Elementary third-graders for "Students Go To Work Day," co-sponsored by the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and the Springfield Public Schools. It also was "Take Your Child to Work Day" for employees.

Four-Laning of Route 65 North of Springfield Begins

by Bob Edwards

The work to four-lane Route 65 in the Springfield region heads north from Springfield as the final widening project to the south – between Branson and the Missouri-Arkansas line – pushes toward completion by early next year.

Two new lanes will be built between Springfield and Buffalo by 2010. The Springfield-to-Fair Grove leg got under way in May, with two more projects to follow – Fair Grove-to-Route EE at Foose and Foose to Buffalo.

Four-laning the busy highway connecting Springfield, Ozark, Branson and the state line began in the 1970s. Now, with increased growth and traffic north of Springfield, the time has come to add lanes into northern Greene and southern Dallas counties.

"It's an important link not only for jobs, but for recreation," said District Engineer Kirk Juranas.

The four-laning of Route 65 north of Springfield was ranked as a high priority by state engineers and community officials in a statewide planning session following passage of Amendment 3 in 2004. The $16.7-million Springfield-to-Fair Grove project is the first project to address this need.

Juranas said Amendment 3 funding has enabled MoDOT to move faster with improvements to major corridors like Route 65 than otherwise possible.

Few traffic disruptions are expected during the project because most of the work will be done AWAY from the existing highway.

"I think it's going to go pretty smooth," said Central Area Resident Engineer John Sanders. "It's going to be pretty simple as far as traffic control. I'm looking forward to seeing it get done."

for more info

Community Relations Manager Bob Edwards
Phone 417.895.7713
E-mail robert.edwards@modot.mo.gov

3025 E. Kearney
P.O. Box 868
Springfield, MO 65801

Gainesville Supervisor Retires

by Angela Eden

Maint. Supervisor Richard Miller
Service: 29 years (Hired Aug. 14, 1978)

Career: maintenance worker, 1978; senior crew worker, 1988; assistant maintenance supervisor, 1997; regional maintenance supervisor, 2002 – Gainesville.

Memorable Work: Spot sealing and hand patching. "Of course it was hard work, but it was fun doing it."

Biggest Change: The addition of computers to keep track of budgets, time sheets and work activities.

Post-MoDOT Plans: Driving an over-the-road truck and working on his farm.

Miller

"Talkin' Transportation" Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

radiospringfield.com

D9
SouthCentral

Participation Good in "Take Our Children to Work Day" Activities

Sixteen employees and children participated in activities at the District Office on April 26 in observance of Take Our Children to Work Day. The day began with presentations in the conference room, which were followed by a tour of several departments.

Highlights included making asphalt cookies with Senior Highway Designer Melanie Rickard-Elmore and Intermediate Right of Way Specialist Eric Kaut, sifting rocks in the materials lab with Senior Materials Inspector Curtis Dowden and, back by popular demand, a trip to the salt dome. At the end of the morning, the children were presented with certificates, goodie bags and photos of them with the parent or relative that brought them to work.

The South Central District will host a second observance on July 31 for those who would still like to participate but could not due to MAP testing, attendance policies at area schools or other conflicts. A second observance was offered in 2006 and was well attended.

South Central District Engineer Tom Stehn said he appreciates those employees who take time to share their work with children. "It is very possible one or more of the participants will choose to join the MoDOT team someday due to their experience here," he said. "We were pleased to host them for the day."

Participating adults and children included: Melanie Rickard-Elmore, Design, and Scooter Rickard; Lisa Durnell, Right-of-Way, and Emily and Ty; Marsha Lovan, Procurement, and her job shadow Immanuel Ward; Jodi Paulsen, Design, and Shane; Darren Petrus, Risk Management, and Jacob; Rodney Aldridge, Willow Springs Maintenance, and Kendra; Keith Lee, Willow Springs Maintenance, and Isaac; Matt Kincaid, Thayer Maintenance, and Eden; Randy Sanders, Mountain View Maintenance and Dustin; Melanie Curlile, Mountain View Maintenance and Kelsy; Jonathan Estes, Mountain View Maintenance, and John; Eric Kaut, Right of Way, and Haley Bland; Len Jones, Survey, and Ryan; Denna Tune, Human Resources, and Lowell; Natalie Rodgers, Community Relations, and Drew; and Leowen Earls, Summersville Maintenance, and his job shadow Billy White. Thayer Maintenance personnel who chose to spend the day in the field with their children included: John King and Meghan, David Massey and Kyndal, and Amos Purcell and Garek.

Additional information about the alternate July 31 observance will be communicated as that date nears.

Pictured are several of the children that participated on April 26.

Mock Accident Scene Created at Waynesville High School

Buckle Up and Impaired Driving Messages Serve as Focus

Two crashed cars, a fatality, police barricades, a school resource officer and the sounds of a screaming mother awaited the students of Waynesville High School on the afternoon of May 4 – the day before prom. Like curtains on a stage, tarps covering the scene were removed and the drama unfolded in front of them. A mock accident scene had been set up to create a real life experience and bring home the importance of choosing to buckle up and not drive impaired.

Senior Maintenance Worker Danny Bassett, with the Dixon Maintenance Facility, coordinated the event, which was part of the Blueprint for Safer Roadways campaign. His work resulted in a very realistic event that brought several students to tears and had the adrenaline of the responders pumping.

Drama students served as victims and spent the morning working with Danny, the fire chief and others to play roles in the scene. Moulage, or simulated blood, was used to add visual impact and the students were placed strategically to give the appearance of an actual car crash.

Ambulances, fire and tow trucks, highway patrol cars and even a helicopter helped paint the picture. Responders cut the top off each vehicle to remove the victims and a coroner pronounced one who had been ejected dead.

The action was captured on tape and photographed by MoDOT Multimedia Services employees Steve Bushko, Wes Farris and Cathy Morrison. With the volume of resources expended, replicating this event at every school would be costly and next to impossible. Steve, Wes and Cathy's efforts will be combined into a DVD, which will be distributed to schools in an effort to help broaden the reach of the Waynesville event.

Waynesville High School Drama students: Melissa Elden, Katlyn Johnson, Tyecorey Davison, James Large, Vanessa Martinez and Joshuea Mathew

for more info

Community Relations Manager Ann Marie Newberry
Phone 417.469.6203

910 Old Springfield Road
P.O. Box 220
Willow Springs, MO 65793

D10 Southeast

Award for Excellence

A quintet of bridge improvements in Mississippi County were honored in District 10 with an Award for Excellence. The Transportation Engineers Association of Missouri selected the project as the "Most Innovative Solution" in the small project category and awarded District 10 at its annual conference on March 22.

"We are so excited with the award," said Eric Krapf, transportation project manager. "The project team worked hard to tackle the concerns of the local drivers with an economical solution."

The work began as a bridge replacement project on Route 80. After further discussions with the community, the project team found another avenue that would better utilize the allotted money. Maintenance work was done on the Route 80 bridge and the additional money would now be channeled into making repairs to four additional bridges; two on Route 102 and two on Route 77.

The District 10 project team includes Mark Pfeffer, highway designer; Eric Krapf, transportation project manager; Jeff Wachter, transportation project designer; Tonya Wells, senior community relations specialist; and Stan Johnson, area engineer.

'Take Two' Assemblies Held at Ten Area Schools

by Belinda McMurry

Mothers Against Drunk Driving, along with the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, recently held *Take Two* assemblies at various schools in Southeast Missouri. The agencies hope the assemblies will decrease the fatalities on Missouri roads by educating young people of the possible dangers when making poor choices behind the wheel.

Developed by MADD, the 45-minute multimedia show, *Take Two*, took Southeast Missouri students behind the scenes of a Hollywood production, showing that on the set you get a second chance if you make a mistake—in the real world, there aren't second chances. This message was presented to area students on three over-sized screens at 10 area high school gymnasiums.

Gymnasiums were packed with attentive students, listening to messages dealing with substance use, teen driving, media and advertising pressures, consequences of substance use and empowerment.

The assemblies were held between April 2 and April 11 ... strategically prior to the high school prom season and high school graduations.

Chaffee High School was one of the area high schools that recently participated in the *Take Two* assemblies. The assemblies were recently held at 10 area high schools in Southeast Missouri.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Angie Wilson
Phone	573.472.6632
E-mail	angela.wilson@modot.mo.gov

2675 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801

Chris Sifford Memorial Highway Dedicated

by Belinda McMurry

A ceremony took place April 27 at the Puxico Memorial Park to dedicate Highway 51 as the Chris Sifford Memorial Highway.

Sifford, a former resident of Puxico, was chief of staff and senior adviser to the late Governor Mel Carnahan, prior to a tragic plane accident on Oct. 16, 2000. Carnahan was in his second term as Missouri governor, campaigning for the U.S. Senate when the small plane, piloted by Carnahan's son, crashed. Sifford lost his life in the plane crash along with the governor and the governor's son.

Prior to the unfortunate accident, Carnahan and Sifford worked with District 10 on numerous transportation initiatives. But in addition to Sifford's obvious ties to MoDOT, District 10 had special connections with Sifford. District 10's Senior Risk Management Technician Sue Sifford is Chris' sister, making the recent Memorial Highway Dedication ceremony even a little closer to our hearts.

Along with the Sifford family, Representative Billy Pat Wright, former U.S. Senator Jean Carnahan and Puxico Chief of Police Johnny Clark led the dedication ceremony. The memorial highway signs, located on Route 51 within the Puxico city limits, were unveiled during the ceremony.

Kids Day at MoDOT

Take Our Children to Work Day was held April 26 at the Southeast District Office in Sikeston. In conjunction with this event, the kids also participated with the National Credit Union Youth Week – this year's theme was "Stash Your Cash at the Credit Union." Those participating included Cody Mitchell, Jim Britton's grandson; Madison Smith, Charlotte Butler's niece; Madison Lancaster, Jay Lancaster's daughter; Lindsay Young, Jeremy Hill's daughter; Cory Brock, April Brock's son; Conrad Masterson, Pam Masterson's son; and Tammie Graham, senior financial services technician.

Recent Retirement

David Malone retired May 1 after 27 years with MoDOT. Malone was a regional maintenance supervisor in Kennett. Cherry Malone (left) and Maintenance Superintendent David Kitchens (right) presented Malone (middle) with a cake during a recent retirement party.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

Community Relations
Missouri Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840
www.modot.org
1-888 ASK MODOT

Editor
Kristi Jamison

Design Coordinator
Dennis Forbis

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Kristi Jamison, editor
573.526.2482
Kristine.Jamison@modot.mo.gov

Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.

Please share this publication and recycle it after reading.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

Missouri Department of Transportation
Community Relations
105 W. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65102

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MoDOT "Pitches In" to Celebrate Earth Day

story by Megan Mills, photo by Shaun Schmitz

Sunshine and pleasant temperatures helped make April 20 the perfect spring day to celebrate Earth Day. Approximately 1,500 Missouri students turned out for this year's Earth Day celebration, which was held on the Capitol lawn.

"We always get a big crowd when the weather cooperates," said Roadside Maintenance Supervisor Stacy Armstrong.

MoDOT's booths were a big hit this year! The department gave out 3,000 Norway Spruce seedlings and encouraged the students to plant them to beautify their yards. The students also stopped by to sign the litter pledge and promise to spread the word about Missouri's litter problem.

And of course MoDOT's own Twila Tanner, of Survivor Vanuatu fame, co-hosted this year's Environmental Survivor game again. The game tests students environmental know-how and is based on the popular television program.

District 5 also participated in the event with their game, "Pitch In For a Litter Free Earth," that challenged students to "pitch" the trash into a bucket.

"This is the first year a district has taken the initiative to participate in the event," Armstrong said. "The idea for the game was very creative and the kids loved it!"

The event is sponsored annually by the Department of Natural Resources to encourage children to take care of the environment and preserve natural resources. A variety of state agencies also participate to help educate students and spread awareness about being responsible for our environment.

For photographs or more information about the 2007 Earth Day Celebration, visit *www.dnr.mo.gov/earthday/media.htm.*

Students and adults flocked to MoDOT's booth where the department was passing out Norway Spruce seedlings during the annual Earth Day celebration. They were encouraged to take them home and plant them in their own yards.

MoDOT Helps Motorists Get on Board With Rail Safety

by Kristi Jamison

Did you know that every two hours a vehicle or pedestrian is struck by a train? Or that you are 20 times more likely to die in a vehicle crash with a train than you are to die in a two-vehicle crash? Or that 50 percent of the fatalities in Missouri last year resulted from motorists driving around gates at active warning devices?

Those are just three important reasons why MoDOT joined forces with several agencies to kick off a campaign last month promoting rail safety. The campaign also got the support of Gov. Matt Blunt, who declared April 22-28 as Rail Safety Week in Missouri at a news conference held on board an antique Union Pacific lounge car on April 25.

"Missourians enjoy the many benefits of rail transportation," Blunt said, "and it is important to respect the measures designed to help keep our transportation systems safe."

Also at the news conference was Lt. Col. Richard Coffey, assistant superintendent of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

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Gov. Matt Blunt and Lt. Col. Richard Coffey of the MSHP joined MoDOT and Missouri Operation Lifesaver to promote rail safety in April.

He reminded motorists to Look, Listen and Live!

"Missouri is currently experiencing a 24 percent decrease statewide in traffic deaths when compared to the same time period in 2006," said Lt. Col. Coffey. "Special attention and safety around rail crossings by motorists and pedestrians can help continue the reduction in traffic deaths throughout the year."

Meanwhile, personnel from MoDOT, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Missouri Operation Lifesaver, local law enforcement agencies and railroads traveled to various public grade crossings during Rail Safety Week, passing out tips for crossing railroad tracks safely. This activity, which will continue across Missouri throughout the fall, is part of the Positive Enforcement Program – an educational awareness program aimed at helping Missourians make safe decisions at railroad crossings and around railroad tracks and properties.

"With more than 4,000 miles of railroad track, 3,800 public crossings and 3,000 private crossings, rail safety is an important issue in Missouri," said Rod Massman, MoDOT's administrator of railroads. "We are stepping up our efforts to educate motorists about rail safety to reduce injuries and save lives."